

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to correct an inadvertent error at the end of the claim, whereby "3.0 to 5.0 ($\times 10^{-5}$ ml/cm²/μm) or more" has been changed to "3.0 to 5.0 ($\times 10^{-5}$ ml/cm²/μm)".

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejection of Claims 1-15

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshino et al. (US 5955185) in view of Takahashi (JP 2003-073598) and Nojima et al. (US 6620470).

The Examiner's Position

The Examiner's position is set forth in detail in the Office Action and will not be repeated here for purposes of brevity. However, Applicants do note that the Examiner relies on the newly cited Nojima reference as teaching a porous structure containing at least organic polymer fine particles (column 22, lines 1-10) and that the void volume per unit thickness is 3.0 to 5.0 ($\times 10^{15}$ ml/cm²/micrometers) or more (column 11, line 65-column 12, line 7). Further, Applicants note that the Examiner considers that it would have been obvious to modify the method taught by Yoshino (in view of Takahashi) with the disclosure of Nojima in order to provide high ink absorption and a high surface smoothness.

Applicants' Response

In response, Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious all the requirements of the present invention, as discussed in detail below.

In particular, Applicants note that present claim 1 includes the requirement that the colorant receiving layer has a porous structure containing organic polymer fine particles.

In contrast, the disclosure at column 22, lines 1-10 in Nojima as cited by the Examiner in this regard concerns a porous interlayer, which is different from Nojima's ink absorptive layer (see column 22, lines 2-4 in particular) and thus is not a colorant receiving layer as in the present invention.

Further, Applicants note that Nojima teaches that its ink absorptive layer contains inorganic particles (see column 5, lines 19-23).

Since Nojima's porous interlayer is not a colorant receiving layer, and since Nojima's ink absorptive layer is only disclosed as containing inorganic particles, Applicants submit that the cited art combination including Nojima does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the present requirement that the colorant receiving layer has a porous structure containing organic polymer fine particles, and thus the cited art combination does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the present invention.

Thus, Applicants submit that the present invention is not obvious over Yoshino in view of Takahashi and Nojima, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Obviousness Rejection of Claim 16

On page 13 of the Office Action, claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshino et al. (US 5955185), Takahashi (JP 2003-073598) and Nojima et al. (US 6620470), and further in view of Terasa et al (US 20020174805).

The Examiner's Position

The Examiner's position is basically the same as that set forth previously with respect to claim 16, except that the Examiner now relies on Yoshino as the primary reference and includes Nojima. The Examiner considers that it would have been obvious to modify the method taught by Yoshino (in view of Takahashi and Nojima) with the disclosure of Terasa in order to provide a higher quality ink.

Applicants' Response

In response, Applicants submit initially that Terasa concerns a process for producing a hardenable composition with high storage stability (see, e.g., the Abstract), and it does not discuss an ink at all. Thus, Applicants submit that there is no reason why one would look to Terasa to provide a higher quality ink, and therefore, its combination with the other references is improper.

Further, Applicants submit that the organic polymer fine particles recited in claim 16 are the organic polymer fine particles in the colorant receiving layer in claim 1, and are not present in the ink composition in the present invention. Thus, even if one would have used Terasa to provide a higher quality ink, such would not have resulted in the invention of claim 16.

Thus, Applicants submit that the present invention is not obvious over Yoshino in view of Takahashi and Nojima and further in view of Terasa, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

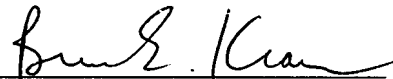
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